

Message Text

SECRET

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TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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S E C R E T STATE 240801

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: FRGPRESSENTATION FOR DECEMBER 11 PLENARY

REFS: A. VIENNA 9980; B. VIENNA 9981

1. WE APPRECIATE REASONS IN REF A FOR ACCEPTING FRG FORMULATION ON LINKAGE OF THE TWO MBFR PHASES, OR SOME EQUIVALENT VARIANT, FOR PRESENTATION TO EAST BEFORE CHRISTMAS BREAK. FOLLOWING, HOWEVER, ARE OUR CONCERNS WITH THIS APPROACH.

2. QUESTION OF LINKAGE OF THE TWO MBFR PHASES APPEARS TO

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HAVE TAKEN ON CONNOTATION IN EAST/WEST DISCUSSIONS OF

IMPLICIT RECOGNITION THAT FRG FORCES WOULD FIGURE IN PHASE TWO. AS SUCH, A CHANGE IN THE FORMAL ALLIED POSITION ON LINKAGE GOING BEYOND THAT STATED IN ALLIED PROPOSAL OF NOVEMBER 22 WOULD BE A TACTICAL STEP SOUGHT BY THE SOVIETS. FURTHER, IT COULD ENCOURAGE SOVIET EXPECTATIONS THAT COMPOSITION OF PHASE TWO WOULD BE UP FOR DISCUSSION IN PHASE ONE. THE PROPOSED FRG LANGUAGE IS ONE OF A NUMBER OF CARDS WE COULD PLAY TO MOVE NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. WE BELIEVE A THOROUGH REVIEW OF SUCH CARDS IN THE CONTEXT OF NEGOTIATING PRIORITIES IS NECESSARY BEFORE ANY OF THEM SHOULD BE USED. (FYI - SUCH A REVIEW IS UNDERWAY IN WASHINGTON. END FYI.)

3. WE WOULD WISH TO REVIEW FURTHER QUESTIONS OF STRATEGY, AND HOW TO MOVE FORWARD AFTER CHRISTMAS INCLUDING QUESTION OF IMPLICATIONS OF EMPHASIS ON A US/SOVIET PHASE PER SE AS OPPOSED TO EMPHASIS ON SPECIFICS OF A FIRST PHASE FOCUSING ON A SOVIET TANK ARMY, AND EMPHASIS ON THE OVERAL OBJECTIVE OF A COMMON CEILING. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT TO SHOW FORTH-COMINGNESS AT THIS STAGE ON LINKAGE OF THE TWO PHASES IN AN EFFORT TO MEET SOVIET HINTS THAT THEY COULD BEGIN DISCUSSION WITH US/SOVIET REDUCTIONS MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED AS A SIGNAL THAT THE ALLIES WERE DOWNGRADING EMPHASIS ON COMMON CEILING, OR ON THEIR OTHER SPECIFIC FIRST PHASE OBJECTIVES.

4. FOR THESE REASONS, YOU SHOULD OPPOSE ANY CHANGE IN ALLIED POSITION ON LINKAGE OF THE TWO MBFR PHASES(REF B, PARA II-6)AS WELL AS PROPOSAL ON HOW TO PROCEED AFTER RECESS, WHICH AS FORMULATED IN PARA III REF B, IS LESS THAN ORIGINAL ALLIED PROPOSAL.

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